AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A gaming machine having a display and a game controller arranged to control images of symbols displayed on the display, the game controller being arranged to play a game wherein at least one random event is caused to be displayed on the display ~~means~~ and, if a predefined winning event occurs, the <u>gaming</u> machine awards a prize, the gaming machine including a determining module for determining whether or not at least one further prize, following ~~the awarding~~ <u>an award</u> of an initial prize, is to be awarded, the determining ~~means~~ <u>module</u> using the value of that initial prize in determining ~~the~~ <u>a</u> probability of ~~the~~ <u>a</u> player successfully winning the at least one further prize.

Claim 2 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 1 in which the determining module is implemented in software and forms part of the game controller.

Claim 3 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 1 in which any prize won is in the form of a number of credits and a probability of success in winning any further prize is determined based upon the average credits awarded to players of the game.

Claim 4 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 3 in which the probability of success is determined so that the average number of credits won in respect of the game after completion of the determination of the probability of success is approximately the same as the number of credits won before the completion of the determination of the probability of success.

Claim 5 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 1 in which the player risks losing at least a portion of the already won prize if any subsequent outcome is unsuccessful.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The gaming machine of claim 1 which comprises ~~the~~ addition of prizes to an already won prize to determine the probability of success of winning any further prizes.

Claim 7 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 6 in which the controller has a plurality of pathways and the player is able to choose one of the pathways as an initial step in playing the game.

Claim 8 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 7 in which, in each subsequent step of the game, the player is able to switch from one pathway to another pathway.

Claim 9 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 7 in which each pathway has a predetermined number of steps.

Claim 10 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 9 in which each pathway has the same number of steps.

Claim 11 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 9 in which a numerical constant is applied to each step in each pathway in determining the probability of successfully completing that step in the pathway if selected by the player, the numerical constant being related to an average prize won up to that point in the game.

Claim 12 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 11 in which corresponding steps in each of the pathways have the same numerical constant associated with them.

Claim 13 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 11 in which the numerical constants are predetermined.

Claim 14 (Original): The gaming machine of claim 11 in which the numerical constants are determined such that the effect of a player switching pathways is obviated.

Claim 15 (Currently amended): A method of operating a gaming machine, the gaming machine having a display and a game controller arranged to control images of symbols displayed on the display, the game controller being arranged to play a game wherein at least one random event is caused to be displayed on the display ~~means~~ and, if a predefined winning event occurs, the gaming machine awards a prize, the method including determining whether or not at least one further prize, following ~~the awarding~~ an award of an initial prize, is to be awarded by using the value of that initial prize in determining ~~the~~ a probability of ~~the~~ a player successfully winning the at least one further prize.

Claim 16 (Original): The method of claim 15 in which any prize won is in the form of a number of credits and in which the method includes determining the probability of success in winning any further prize based upon the average credits awarded to players of the game.

Claim 17 (Original): The method of claim 16 which includes determining the probability of success so that an average number of credits won in respect of the game after completion of the determination of the probability of success is approximately the same as the number of credits won before the completion of the determination of the probability of success.

Claim 18 (Original): The method of claim 15 which includes the player risking at least a portion of the already won prize if any subsequent outcome is unsuccessful.

Claim 19 (Original): The method of claim 15 which includes adding prizes to an already won prize to determine the probability of success of winning any further prizes.

Claim 20 (Original): The method of claim 19 in which the controller has a plurality of pathways and the method includes allowing the player to choose one of the pathways as an initial step in playing the game.

Claim 21 (Original): The method of claim 20 which includes, in each subsequent step of the game allowing the player to switch from one pathway to another pathway.

Claim 22 (Original): The method of claim 21 in which each pathway has a predetermined number of steps, with each pathway having the same number of steps and in which the method includes applying a numerical constant to each step in each pathway in determining the probability of successfully completing that step in the pathway if selected by the player, the numerical constant being related to an average prize won up to that point in the game.

Claim 23 (Original): The method of claim 22 which includes applying the same numerical constants to corresponding steps in each of the pathways.

Claim 24 (Original): The method of claim 22 which includes predetermining the numerical constants before the game is played.

Claim 25 (Original): The method of claim 22 which includes determining the numerical constants such that the effect of a player switching pathways is obviated.

Claim 26 (New): A gaming machine comprising a display and a game controller arranged to control images of symbols displayed on the display, the gaming machine adapted to play a game wherein images representing at least one random event are caused to be displayed on the display, and the gaming machine awards a prize on occurrence of a winning event during play of the game, wherein the gaming machine further comprises a determining module that, based on a win probability, determines whether or not a further prize, following an award of an initial prize, is to be awarded, wherein the gaming machine requires a wager comprising at least a portion of the initial prize to be made to purchase the chance to win the further prize, wherein the gaming machine allows a player at least some control over the value of one of the wager and the further prize and wherein for all possible combinations of the wager and the further prize, the win probability is related to the value of the wager and the value of the further prize so as to maintain a constant expected return to player.

Claim 27 (New): The gaming machine of claim 26, wherein the gaming machine allows a player at least some control over the value of the wager.

Claim 28 (New): The gaming machine of claim 27, wherein the value of the further prize is fixed.

Claim 29 (New): The gaming machine of claim 27, wherein the value of the further prize is determined by the gaming machine using a random selection process.

Claim 30 (New): The gaming machine of claim 26, wherein the gaming machine allows a player at least some control over the value of the further prize.

Claim 31 (New): The gaming machine of claim 30, wherein the determining module determines whether or not a still further prize is to be awarded, and wherein the probability that the still further prize is awarded is a function of the sum of the values of the further prize and the still further prize, and wherein the game controller controls images displayed on the display means to represent a prize winning process involving a plurality of successive stages in which a first stage

comprises representations of a chance to win the further prize and a second stage comprises representations of a chance to win the still further prize, the second stage following the first stage in the plurality of successive stages.

Claim 32 (New): The gaming machine of claim 31, including a further prize selector and the value of both the further prize and the still further prize is determined from a plurality of options based on operation of the further prize selector by the player of the gaming machine.

Claim 33 (New): A gaming machine comprising a display and a game controller arranged to control images of symbols displayed on the display, the gaming machine adapted to play a game wherein images representing at least one random event are caused to be displayed on the display, and the gaming machine awards a prize on occurrence of a winning event during play of the game, wherein the gaming machine further comprises a determining module that, based on a win probability, determines whether or not a further prize, following an award of an initial prize, is to be awarded, wherein gaming machine requires a wager comprising at least a portion of the initial prize to be made to purchase the chance to win the further prize, and wherein the win probability is the quotient of the wager and the sum of the wager and the value of the further prize.

Claim 34 (New): A gaming machine comprising a user interface including a display and a user input to allow a player to input commands, a game controller arranged to control images of symbols displayed on the display to represent a prize winning process involving N successive stages, wherein N is at least two, and a determining module that, based on a win probability for each stage, determines which of the N stages the prize winning process stops and any associated prize to be awarded by the gaming machine, wherein each stage is associated with two or more prizes and the prizes increase for each successive stage and the gaming machine allows the player to use the user input to determine which of the two or more prizes will be awarded from a stage if the prize winning process stops on that stage, the player being provided with the option to select any one of the prizes associated with a stage, and wherein the probability of the prize winning process ending on a stage is a function of each of the prizes that have been selected by the player in all preceding stages and a function of the prize selected by the player for that stage.

Claim 35 (New): The gaming machine of claim 34, wherein the probability of the prize winning process ending a particular stage P_{Sn} is the solution to two simultaneous equations:

Prize 0 * P_{S0} + Prize 1 *(P_{S1}+...+P_{Sn}) ... + Prize n *(P_{S1}+...+P_{Sn}) = NC

and

P_{S0} + P_{S1}+...+P_{SN} = 1

wherein:

P_{S1} to P_{SN} are the probabilities of the prize winning process ending on stages 1 to n respectively;

Prize 0 is a consolation prize, awarded by the gaming machine if the prize winning process ends before the first stage, and P_{S0} is the probability of the prize winning process ending before the first stage, wherein both Prize 0 and P_{SO} may be greater than or equal to zero;

Prize 1 to Prize n-1 are total values of the prizes that have been selected by the player in all of the preceding stages to the stage P_{Sn};

Prize n is the prize value of the stage P_{Sn}; and

NC is a numerical constant that has been selected for that stage.

Claim 36 (New): The gaming machine of claim 35, wherein the value of NC is different between two stages and the highest value NC is associated with the stage P_{SN}.